



AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

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YELLOW DWARF HITS TEXAS GRAIN FIELDS

Yellow dwarf - a virus disease of oats, barley, and wheat - has infected many grain fields (mainly oats) in central, north-central, and, to a lesser degree, the Rolling Plains areas of Texas, reports the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. Under some conditions, the disease has been called red leaf. Infected oat plants have a characteristic salmon-pink to red color, and the plants are dwarfed. The extent of dwarfing depends upon the stage of growth of the plant at the time of infection.

COTTON GINNINGS

Cotton ginned from the 1958 crop in the United States totaled 11.4 million bales, according to the Bureau of the Census. The total compares with 10.9 million bales ginned from the 1957 crop and 13.2 million bales from the 1956 crop. The grade index of the 1958 cotton crop was sharply above that of a year earlier, and the average staple length was the longest of record. Ginnings of American-Egyptian cotton in 1958 are placed at 81,900 bales, reflecting increases of 3% over 1957 and 65% over 1956. As compared with a year ago, American-Egyptian cotton averaged slightly higher in grade but about the same in staple length.

In the states of the Eleventh Federal Reserve District (Arizona, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas), approximately 5.9 million bales of cotton were ginned from the 1958 crop - up 13% from a year earlier.

TOMATO MARKETING ORDER ISSUED

A Federal order authorizing regulation of handling of tomatoes grown in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas will become effective on April 2, according to the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The action follows approval of the program in a referendum held February 25 to March 2.

HONEY PRICE SUPPORT ANNOUNCED

The USDA recently announced that honey will be supported at a national average price of 8.2¢ per lb. during the 1959 marketing season, which begins April 1. The level reflects 60% of the March parity price. The national average support level for 1958-crop honey was 9.6¢ per lb., or 70% of parity.

TREE PLANTING DOUBLES IN 5 YEARS

Tree planting in this country has more than doubled during the past 5 years, reaching an all-time high of 1.6 million acres during the fiscal year ended June 30, 1958, reports the USDA. Forest plantings accounted for 98% of the record total, and windbarrier plantings made up the remainder. The increase in tree plantings is the result of both a growing interest in the enterprise by private landowners and the expansion in tree nurseries. About 86% of the plantings in fiscal 1958 was on privately owned land.

In the states of the Eleventh Federal Reserve District (Arizona, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas), tree plantings during the 1958 fiscal year totaled 148,149 acres, up 55% from the 5-year-earlier level.

FARM FIRE LOSSES RISE

Farm property losses in the Nation as a result of fires amounted to \$156 million during 1958, or \$4 million greater than a year earlier, reports the USDA. The losses include buildings, machinery, crops, and livestock.

SPRING FARROWINGS UP 10%

The number of sows farrowing this spring in nine Corn Belt States is placed at 5.6 million head, or 10% larger than in the spring of 1958 but 1% below the 10-year (1948-57) average, according to the Agricultural Marketing Service. These states (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin) accounted for two-thirds of the national pig crop in 1958.

U. S. LIVESTOCK TRADE

The United States imported \$512 million worth of livestock, meat, and meat products (excluding wool) during 1958, according to the Foreign Agricultural Service. The total was 78% greater than the 1957 imports and 97% above the 1951-55 average. The major factors in this sharp rise were record imports of meat and cattle. U. S. exports of livestock and meat during 1958 amounted to \$287 million, or 25% less than a year earlier but 9% higher than the 1951-55 average. The outlook for 1959 is for a slight reduction in imports and for some increase in exports.

ITALIANS INTRIGUED BY AMERICAN FEED

Many Italians have inquired about the possibility of purchasing feeds and feed grains from the United States as a result of the U. S. exhibit featuring these products at the recent Agricultural Fair in Verona, Italy, reports the USDA. The display - the first of a traveling type ever sponsored by the USDA - will be shown in other Italian cities as well as in other European countries.

POULTRY

The Texas commercial broiler markets were about steady on Monday, March 30, following fairly general price declines during the previous week end, according to the State Department of Agriculture. Trading was moderate in south Texas and normal in east Texas. The following prices per lb. were quoted: South Texas, 15½¢ to 17¢, mostly 16¢; and east Texas, 15¢ to 16¢. (In the latter area, 60% of the sales were at undetermined prices.)

	Area	Week ended March 21, 1959	Percentage change from	
			Previous week	Comparable week, 1958
BROILER CHICK PLACEMENTS	Texas.....	2,271,000	-6	-5
	Louisiana..	494,000	-14	18
	22 states..	36,123,000	0	23

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